

## **Reba Mcentire**

# **"The Christmas Guest"**

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It happened one day near December's end  
Two neighbors called on an old friend  
And they found his shop so meager and lame  
Made gay with a thousand bows of green  
And Conrad was sittin' with face ashined  
When he suddenly stopped as he stiched a twine  
And he said "Oh friends at dawn today  
When the cock was crowin' the night away  
The Lord appeared in a dream to me  
And said 'I'm comin' your guest to be.'

So I've been busy with feet astir  
And strewin' my shop with branches of fir  
The table is spread and the kettle is shined  
And over the rafters the holly is twined  
Now I'll wait for my Lord to appear  
And listen closely so I will hear His step  
As He nears my humble place  
And I'll open the door and look on His face"  
So his friends went home and left Conrad alone  
For this was the happiest day he'd known  
For long since his family had passed away  
And Conrad had spent many a sad Christmas day  
But he knew with the Lord as his Christmas guest

This Christmas would be the dearest and best  
So he listened with only joy in his heart  
And with every sound he would rise with a start  
And look for the Lord to be at his door  
Like the vision he'd had a few hours before  
So he ran to the window after hearin' a sound  
But all he could see on the snow-covered ground  
Was a shabby begger who's shoes were torn  
And all of his clothes were ragged and worn  
But Conrad was touched and he went to the door  
And he said  
"You know, your feet must be frozen and sore  
I have some shoes in my shop for you  
And a coat that'll keep you warmer too"

So with grateful heart, the man went away  
But Conrad noticed the time of day

And wondered what made the Lord so late  
And how much longer he'd have to wait  
When he heard a knock he ran to the door  
But it was only a stranger once more  
A bent ol' lady with a shawl of black  
With a bundle of kindlin' piled on her back

She asked for only a place to rest  
But that was reserved for Conrad's great guest  
But her voice seemed to plead "Don't send me away  
Let me rest for awhile on Christmas day"  
So Conrad brewed her a steamin' cup  
And told her to sit at the table and sup  
But after she left he was filled with dismay  
For he saw that the hours were slippin' away

And the Lord hadn't come as He said He would  
And Conrad felt sure he'd misunderstood  
When out of the stillness he heard a cry  
"Please help me, and tell me where am I!"  
So again he opened his friendly door  
And stood disappointed as twice before  
It was only a child who'd wandered away  
And was lost from her family on Christmas day

Again, Conrad's heart was heavy and sad  
But he knew he should make the little girl glad  
So he called her in and he wiped her tears  
And quieted all her childish fears  
Then he led her back to her home once more  
But as he entered his own darkened door  
He knew the Lord was not comin' today  
For the hours of Christmas had passed away  
So he went to his room and he knelt down to pray  
And he said "Dear Lord, why did You delay?  
What kept You from comin' to call on me?  
For I wanted so much Your Face to see"

When soft in the silence, a voice he heard  
"Lift up your head, for I kept my word  
Three times my shadow crossed your floor  
And three times I came to your lonely door  
I was the begger with bruised, cold feet  
And I was the woman you gave somethin' to eat  
I was the child on the homeless street.  
Three times I knocked and three times I came in  
And each time I found the warmth of a friend  
Of all the gifts love is the best  
And I was honored to be your Christmas guest

